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OFFICE OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Washington, D. C.

JAN 1 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR POLICY COORDINATION

SUBJECT: Alleged British-Yugoslav Cooperation with
Regard to Albania

1. In view of frequent and recurring reports (none of them definitely confirmed and some known to be inaccurate or false) that the British have entered into discussions, and reached agreements, with the Yugoslavs on the question of Albania, we have reviewed our files for the purpose of recapitulating information presently available to us and making such comments as we can to assist in properly evaluating these reports, which are summarized below.

2. According to the Greek Charge d'Affaires in Belgrade, in conversation with Ambassador Cannon on 6 August 1949, "Greeks in Rome" had learned that Abas Kupa and Midhat Frasheri (or their representatives) had visited Tito about mid-July 1949, being flown to Yugoslavia in a British plane. (Top Secret Memorandum dated 9 August 1949, Subject: Alleged Meeting of Albanian Leaders with Tito.)

3. As of late July 1949 the leadership of the BKI in Italy expressed the view that Tito, having found the British (in the persons of [] and [] willing to cooperate, had been persuaded to camouflage as an internal nationalist revolt plans for the overthrow of the present Albanian regime. At the same time the BKI asserted that Abas Kupa and Midhat Frasheri had suddenly renounced Albanian claims to the Kosovo region in order to be acceptable to Tito. The BKI found no explanation for Abas Kupa's trip to Trieste, and the alleged departure of Abas Kupa and Midhat

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Frasheri at the end of July for Venice and (they thought) Trieste unless they were going to Yugoslavia. These "facts", together with the important part played by the British in the formation of the Committee for Free Albania and the earlier British sponsorship of Abas Ermeni, combined to make the BKI see evidence of British collusion with the Yugoslavs in the Albanian question. (Top Secret Memorandum dated 4 August 1949, Subject: BKI Views on Balli Kombetar Activities.)

4. On 31 July 1949 the BKI asserted that Abas Ermeni was accompanied, "on his voyage to Yugoslavia", by [] claiming to have learned from "a reliable Yugoslav source" that Sajd Kryeziu had recently received 500 gold sovereigns from his brother Gani, the BKI stated that Sajd, working with [] had modified and improved the original Yugoslav plan to replace Rexha with a man chosen by Tito (SO DB-18226).

5. A letter purporting to come from an Albanian in Italy and to have been intercepted by a Greek service said that Abas Kupi and Midhat Frasheri went to Trieste on 1 August 1949 to discuss with a representative of Tito plans for an Albanian revolt. (Top Secret Memorandum dated 11 August 1949, Subject: Alleged Meeting of Albanian Leaders with Tito.)

6. Another report (from Trieste) stated that Frasheri and Kupi left Rome secretly for Trieste at the beginning of August 1949 but were unable to enter the Free Territory and stopped in Padua or Venice. (Secret Memorandum, dated 16 August 1949, Subject: Movements of Midhat Frasheri and Abas Kupi.)

7. According to another Trieste report, [] is said to have proposed to Tito and Gani Kryeziu a British-financed plan for a joint Yugoslav-Balli Kombetar action to overthrow the present regime in Albania; the date of this proposal is not stated but would appear to be during July or early August 1949 (SO DB-18237).

8. The same report contained the additional information that [] and a British Colonel [] (presumably []) had allegedly met early in August, at Portofino, Zone B, FTT, with Abas Kupi, Midhat Frasheri, Abas Ermeni, Sajd Kryeziu, Gani Kryeziu and two other (unidentified) Yugoslav representatives from Belgrade. (SO DB-18237).

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9. In line with this ~~memo~~ was one from Athens that, about 4 August 1949, [] and [] met in Trieste with the persons named above and with Kol Gjeloishi and one or two other representatives of Tito in order to discuss plans for the overthrow of the Albanian regime (Top Secret Memorandum, dated 18 August 1949, Subject: Albanian Operation - Alleged Plans for Liberation of Albania).

10. A report from an Italian service, received here considerably later, said that Kupa, Frasher, Ermeni and Sajt Kryeziu had met at Portorose with Gani Kryeziu and other emissaries of Tito early in August, with a British officer in attendance. At this meeting it was allegedly agreed that all political, diplomatic or operational decisions were subject to British veto, especially as regards Yugoslavia's relations with the United States. It was further agreed that Italian influence would be excluded from Albania and that Albania must forever renounce its claims to the Kosovo (Secret Memorandum dated 19 October 1949, Subject: Alleged Agreement between Albanian Leaders and Tito).

11. By way of comment on paras. 4-10 above, the following observations by [] may be pertinent and, in some cases, enlightening.

a. As regards the statement (para. 4) that [] accompanied Ermeni to Trieste, [] said that Ermeni was sent from Rome in a British Embassy car to the border, which he crossed on his own, and was then taken by car to a British safe-house in Trieste. It was about 4 August 1949 when [] and [] were sent to Trieste to reassure Ermeni, when the Italians were threatening with arrest, [] and [] stayed quite openly with General Airey at that time.

b. The Albanian leaders reported to have met with Yugoslav representatives in Trieste under British auspices were not away from Rome long enough (or simultaneously) to permit them to attend together such a meeting in Trieste during the period of [] absence from Rome.

c. The British said that they were unwilling to use [] in any way in connection with the Albanian Operation.

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12. On 3 August 1949, a Greek intelligence spokesman said his service had intercepted a letter from an Albanian political leader in Italy which said that the Allies had decided to operate from the Yugoslav side of Albania, to transfer the Committee to Kosovo, and to invade northern Albania with the forces of Gani Kryeziu. Subsequently, he said a planned uprising in the rest of Albania was calculated to destroy the influence of Gani Kryeziu and eliminate control by Tito; then a provisional government would be formed and a plebiscite held to determine the form of government. This entire movement was allegedly being guided by the British through an Albanian in Rome named Seit (Sajd Kryeziu - ?). (Top Secret Memorandum dated 5 August 1949, Subject: Greek Knowledge of Albanian Operation).

13. Following the meeting in Rome on 7 August 1949 between Ndue Marka Gjoni and British and American representatives (the nationality of the latter, [] allegedly not known to him), BKI leaders in Rome were reported to be more convinced than ever that the Committee for Free Albania was a plot engineered by the British and Yugoslavs to take over Albania for the benefit of their two countries. (Top Secret Memorandum dated 12 August 1949, Subject: Albanian Operation - Alleged British Manoeuvres for Liberation of Albania).

14. In mid-August 1949, a high Greek intelligence official stated that the Italians believed the British to be working to overthrow Hoxha and to bring Albania under Tito. He added that the BKI considered that the British aim, following the overthrow of Hoxha, was to partition Albania between Greece and Yugoslavia. (Top Secret Memorandum dated 18 August 1949, Subject: Albanian Operation - Alleged Plans for Liberation of Albania).

15. On 19 August 1949 a "significant British personality" told the Greek Minister of Public Order that the solution of the Albanian question for the Allied would be cooperation with Tito on condition that Albania be divided three ways, the northern part to go to Yugoslavia, the southern part to Greece, and the remainder to the Albanians. (Top Secret Memorandum dated 15 September 1949, Subject: Transmittal of Memorandum).

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16. [] reported that the British Ambassador to Belgrade was in Trieste about 22-24 August 1949, at a time when [] arrived there and then disappeared. [] suggested only that [] might have gone to Trieste to brief the Ambassador on the Albanian question. There was no suggestion that his visit had any connection with the Yugoslavs.

17. An undated report from Trieste via Rome states that two groups of Albanians, consisting of 24 men each, were sent to Yugoslavia for onward travel to Albania; before their departure from the Free Territory they were allegedly trained and supplied by the British authorities in Zone A. (Secret Memorandum dated 3 November 1949, Subject: Albanian Operation - Alleged British Activities in Albania.)

18. On 5 September 1949 the Vice-Director-General of the Political Affairs Section of the Italian Foreign Office expressed the view that the obvious move for Great Britain, once she was in control of Albania, would be to sacrifice Albania to Greece and Yugoslavia in return for a free hand elsewhere in the Balkans. (80 DB-18605).

19. In September 1949 Sajd Kryeziu, widely regarded as a British agent, was urging that the future Albanian state be divided into Greek and Yugoslav spheres of influence; this plan was said to have British support. (80 DB-18855).

20. On 25 October it was reported that Sajd Kryeziu was receiving a monthly subsidy of 100 gold sovereigns from the Yugoslav Legation in Rome. (80 DB-20051).

21. During the latter part of October, it was said in Belgrade that [] had met recently in Trieste with Albanian resistance leaders, including Gani Kryeziu. British Ambassador Sir Charles Peake on several occasions showed his unwillingness to speak frankly with Ambassador Cannon on the subject of Albania; he admitted having heard the report that Gani Kryeziu was in Trieste but declined to be drawn out further.

22. On 11 November 1949, at a meeting with Prince Marka Gjoni, [] said that the Hoxha regime could be overthrown only through close cooperation with Tito. He also mentioned Sajd Kryeziu as being a strong candidate for the Presidency of the Committee for

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Free Albania on the ground that he was acceptable to Tito. Maclean also quoted Count Sferna as having expressed distrust of any policy which would lead to Yugoslav domination of the Straits of Otranto. (Top Secret Memorandum dated 15 November 1949, Subject: Albanian Operation - BKI Conference in Italy.)

23. According to a letter from an informant in Istanbul, Aziz Bieaku was to leave Istanbul for Yugoslavia on a mission for the British Intelligence Service. No other details were given. (SO DB-21495).

24. A Kossovar Albanian who arrived in Athens apparently in the first part of December 1949 told a companion that the Yugoslav Government had drawn up a joint project with British representatives for the overthrow of the Haxha regime. Tito's conditions for co-operation with the British were described as (1) that the Albanian border should be as it existed in 1939 and (2) that the Albanian-Yugoslav pacts of 1947 should be binding on any future Albanian Government. Italian influence in Albania would be excluded. Albania was allegedly divided by Tito and [] into "operational spheres of influence", the northern part to be exploited by Yugoslavia from Kossovo and Montenegro and the southern part to be exploited by Great Britain from Greece and Italy. Tito and [] were also said to have agreed to exclude American influence from Albania on the ground that such influence might interfere with the carrying out of the British-Yugoslav agreements. The Yugoslavs wished the British to wean the BKI away from the Italians, and persuaded it to agree to Tito's conditions for collaboration with the British. (Secret Memorandum dated 27 December 1949, Subject: Albanian Operation - Report by a Kossovar.)

25. From the above it appears that official representatives of the Greek and Italian Governments have some reason to believe that the British may have entered into an agreement with Tito regarding the future of Albania, and that they have had cause for concern with regard to the protection of their own national interests and aspirations. It also appears that a certain amount of information related to this alleged agreement has come, directly or indirectly, from persons close to the BKI, which has obvious reasons of its own for wishing to discredit the Committee for Free Albania as presently constituted. However, the number of reports and the diversity of their points of origin tend to lend credence to the

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JAN 26 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR POLICY COORDINATION

**SUBJECT: Albanian Operation - French Approach to BKI
and Kossovars for Operations in Albania**

1. The following has been reported from reliable sources:
2. At the invitation of the SDECE, a meeting took place on 19 January 1950 in Rome which was attended by leaders of the BKI, Xhafer Deva, Ndue Marka Gjoni and Henri Ribiere, Chief of the French Intelligence Service. Ribiere was accompanied by two of his representatives and introduced himself as Director General of the French Political Affairs Division, implying this was a part of the French Foreign Office. The purpose of the meeting was for further discussion of BKI and Kossovar cooperation with the SDECE in an operation designed to overthrow the present Albanian Government. Ndue Marka Gjoni attended the meeting as a representative of his father, Prince Marka Gjoni.
3. During the interview, Ribiere asked the individuals noted in paragraph two above if they were interested in participating in the liberation of Albania. Receiving an affirmative reply, Ribiere then inquired concerning their relationship with the Committee for Free Albania and was advised they had not been invited to join as representatives of their respective parties.
4. Ribiere then inquired whether they would be willing to work with Nuredin Vlora and was informed that they had high respect for Vlora and would be willing to cooperate with any anti-Communist leader working for Albania's freedom from the Russians, Yugoslavs, and Greeks.
5. On receipt of this reply, Ribiere stated that Frante is interested in the liberation of Albania and believes that the entire reconstitution of the Committee for Free Albania, with inclusion of the BKI and the Second League of Pristina, is necessary for this purpose. He proposed Vlora as president of the reorganized Committee and stated he would urge such a reorganization upon the United States Department of State.
6. Ribiere also promised to insure the inclusion of Albanian exiles in a new propaganda body which he said would soon be set up in

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London, and which would include representatives from all Iron Curtain countries.

7. Ribiere stated that reorganization of the Committee for Free Albania was essential since it is presently dominated by the British. Ribiere did not comment further in this regard but emphasized possible French cooperation with the Americans rather than with the British. He further mentioned that operations mounted by the British from Malta have so far been unsuccessful and that this lack of success was one of the reasons making necessary a reorganization of the Committee.

8. It is understood that no definite reply was given to the French by the BKKI leaders and Deva. It is reported, however, that the BKKI leadership feels that to refuse French support would cause the French to turn to the Balli Kombetar in an effort to win at least some members of that group away from the British. It is believed that Xhafer Deva will follow the BKKI lead in this matter.

9. As has been our consistent policy in the past, we are instructing our representatives to avoid any discussion of the political aspects of these developments. Since it is realized that your office may wish to take some action based upon this information, it is requested that no action whatsoever based upon this report be initiated prior to consultation with OSO.

Assistant Director
Special Operations

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belief that the British may have had some discussions with the Yugoslavs regarding the future of Albania. In this connection such widely different reports as those of the meetings of a "significant British personality" with the then Greek Minister of Public Order (see para. 15 above) and of [] with Prince Marka Gjoni in Rome (see para. 22 above) are not without interest, especially when considered in the light of British Ambassador Sir Charles Peake's reluctance to discuss frankly with his American colleague in Belgrade the question of Albania and the whereabouts of Gani Kryeziu (see para. 21 above).

[]
Assistant Director
Special Operations

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